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ABSTRACT

This booklet is designed to assist beginning and experienced teachers in public and private vocational education programs in evaluating the performance of present and past students as a means of gaining insight into the effectiveness of vocational programming and instruction. Discussed first are issues and procedures involved in process and product evaluation. The philosophy and objectives of vocational education are examined. Two vocational program evaluation forms are provided. Procedures for tabulating data obtained from the two forms are explained and a brief summary concludes the guide. (MN)

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Evaluation Hints for Vocational Teachers

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American Technical Society
Chicago, Illinois

To my father, Albert J. Pautler—
master teacher, friend and craftsman,
who always took the time to care, help and love.

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NOTE TO THE USER

Evaluation Hints for Vocational Teachers is designed for beginning and experienced teachers in public and private vocational education programs.

Evaluation and accountability have become big issues in education. Vocational educators are concerned about, and involved in, the process of program and product evaluation. Today teachers at the local level are often responsible for establishing the objectives for vocational education programs and evaluating the performance of their students on the basis of these objectives.

Carrying out these tasks is a realistic responsibility of all dedicated, professional teachers concerned with students' success in the world of work. For such teachers, *Evaluation Hints for Vocational Teachers* will prove to be an easy-to-use guide; it provides a simple system of evaluating student performance, an excellent indicator of teacher performance and success.

Teachers and administrators are encouraged to use the forms included in this booklet to collect data from present and former students. The methods presented here have been tried and used successfully in a number of vocational schools.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Basic attempts at teacher-evaluation of vocational education programs have centered on follow-up studies of graduates. Follow-up data for all public secondary and postsecondary vocational programs are required by the U.S. Office of Education. The data are collected at the local level and forwarded to the state Department of Education, which in turn forwards them to the U.S. Office of Education.

Process and Product Evaluation

Local vocational education programs can be evaluated in terms of process or product. *Process* refers to the instructional program, the curriculum, the facilities and the actual teaching, as well as to the community resources and involvement expended. *Product* refers to the graduates and perhaps even to the dropouts of an educational program. All evaluation, therefore, centers on process or product, or on a combination of both.

Vocational educators have always been concerned with two basic questions:

1. What vocational programs should be offered?
2. Are the programs offered effective?

After the decision as to what programs to offer is made, the effectiveness of those programs must be determined. If most of the program graduates are employed in the type of job they were trained for, vocational decision makers will not have much additional concern. However, if graduates are not finding or entering employment in jobs related to their training, three additional questions must be asked:

1. Were the students allowed to enter programs based on their needs, desires, abilities and interests?
2. Do the students who complete a program have the necessary knowledge, skills and abilities to perform in the occupation trained for?
3. Are there enough available jobs in the area of specialization to meet the employment needs of the graduates?

If it is found that the graduates are deficient in skills, abilities and knowledge; some additional questions are in order:

1. Was suitable course content offered in the program?
2. Did the students have the necessary abilities to enter the program in the first place?
3. Were the instructional methods and course content appropriate for the learners?

Meaningful evaluation of any facet of a program should be based on stated objectives established prior to the program. However, the statement of philosophy and the objectives of most schools are enough to make one wonder how meaningful evaluation can occur. Do not be disappointed if the school or program you are working in does not have a clearly defined and established set of easily measurable objectives. If it does, you are indeed lucky--the existence of such objectives is the exception rather than the rule.

PHILOSOPHY AND OBJECTIVES FOR VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

Your first step should be to obtain a copy of the official philosophy and objectives of the school or program you are teaching in. This will give you a very basic and clear idea of the direction established for vocational education within your district or community.

At all levels—national, state and local—education must have some philosophical base and defined objectives if it is to have direction and purpose. At the national and state levels, educational direction is established by means of legislation and funding of programs, and this is especially true for vocational education. At the local level, schools normally have some statement of philosophy and list of objectives. These serve the broad purposes of education in general for that community. Much thought and planning—usually involving input from the community, the teaching staff, the members of the board of education and the school administrators—go into such statements.

The following statement of philosophy was adopted by the board of education of a vocational district upon the recommendation of the teachers of the district. It was developed using the methods suggested in this publication.

> The occupational education program provides education and training in specific occupational areas, closely following industrial and technical practices of private industry. The primary purpose of the program is to make an individual more employable in one group of occupations than in another. Completion of a program should 1) prepare individuals for gainful employment as semiskilled or skilled workers, as technicians or subprofessionals, in recognized occupations and in new and emerging occupations, or (2) prepare individuals for enrollment in advanced technical programs.

The same district adopted the seven objectives that follow. These objectives are given here because they, in some form,

should constitute the basis for any meaningful evaluation of a program.

1. Upon completion of a vocational education program, 65% of the students will rate the experience satisfying.
2. Upon completion of a vocational education program, 65% of the students will indicate that they would take the same program if they had to make the choice again.
3. Upon completion of a vocational education program, 60% of the students available for employment or advanced education will indicate that they plan either to enter the area of specialization they prepared for or to go on to advanced training/education in that area.
4. Within six months after graduation 75% of the graduates of any licensed-occupation program (e.g., in cosmetology, licensed practical nursing) will pass the appropriate examination.
5. Within six months after graduation, 60% of the graduates who seek employment will be employed full-time.
6. Within six months after graduation, 35% of the graduates who seek employment will be employed full time in their area of specialization.
7. Within six months after graduation, 15% of the graduates who seek employment will be employed full-time in positions they consider related to their area of specialization.

The teachers and administrators of a district should decide upon the percentage that can be used as the minimum acceptable level for each of the objectives in the evaluation. The philosophy statement and the objectives can then be presented to the board of education, which is responsible for taking action on and approving them.

Each year, a follow-up study of graduates should be made to determine how well the stated objectives are being met. The seven objectives given in the example are the basis for the recommendations in this text, and the "within six months after graduation" stipulation has been included throughout. Note that other time limits can be imposed and that the objectives and results should be reworded to reflect the amount of time allotted. This system can be used school-wide as well as in the individual classroom, shop or laboratory by one or more teachers.

SAMPLE DATA FORMS

Two basic evaluation forms are used in this system. For ease of understanding and classification, each will be discussed separately.

Form A

The first phase of evaluation consists of collecting data relating to the first three objectives: (1) satisfaction with vocational program, (2) selection of same program again, and (3) intention to enter the area of specialization trained for. The data should be collected from the students a few weeks before graduation. At this point, what is wanted is immediate information about the program the students have just completed. The same three questions are repeated on Form B, which is used a specified time after program completion and serves as a source of comparable information. Form A can be given to the students for completion during a class period or it can be taken home and returned the next day. Do *not* ask the students to put their names on the forms.

VOCATIONAL PROGRAM EVALUATION FORM A

My expected date of program completion or graduation is _____
The vocational program that I specialized in was *(example: automotive mechanics)*

INSTRUCTIONS:

Please complete each item, using the 7-point rating scale. Choose the number that most closely reflects your opinion and write it in the box to the right of the item, as in the following example:

Vitamin C is:
very beneficial 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 *not* at all beneficial [3]

A rating of 3 indicates that vitamin C is thought to be only a little beneficial.

1. My experience in the area of specialization that I pursued while in the vocational education program was:
   very satisfying 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 *not* at all satisfying ☐

2. If I could choose an area of specialization over again I would:
   choose the same specialization 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 *not* choose the same specialization ☐

3. My occupational/educational Plans for the future are to:
   enter my area of specialization 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 *not* enter my area of specialization ☐

Form B

The second phase of the evaluation takes place after graduation and consists of using Form B to collect data related to *all seven* objectives. The data collected from Form A can then be compared with the data collected from Form B.

In the suggested procedure, the information is collected six months *after* graduation. As mentioned earlier, this time limit is not an absolute, and the information may be collected at any point after graduation. (The author has received replies after mailing copies of Form B—along with a cover letter and a stamped, self-addressed envelope—as long as two years after graduation.)

VOCATIONAL PROGRAM EVALUATION FORM B

My date of program completion or graduation was _____
The vocational program that I specialized in was *(example: cosmetology)*
_____

INSTRUCTIONS FOR ITEMS 1-3:

Please complete each item, using the 7-point rating scale. Choose the number that most closely reflects your opinion and write it in the box to the right of the item, as in the following example:

Vitamin C is:
very beneficial 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 *not* at all beneficial [3]

A rating of 3 indicates that vitamin C is thought to be only a little beneficial.

1. My experience in the area of specialization that I pursued while in the vocational education program was:
   very satisfying 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 *not* at all satisfying [ ]

2. If I could choose an area of specialization over again I would:
   choose the same specialization 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 *not* choose the same specialization [ ]

3. My occupational/educational plans for the future are to:
   enter (or stay in) my area of specialization 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 *not* enter (or stay in my area of specialization [ ]

INSTRUCTIONS FOR ITEMS 4-7:

Each question is followed by a list of possible answers. For each question please choose the one answer most applicable and write the number of the answer in the box to the right of the question, as in the following example:

How beneficial do you think vitamin C is?
1. very beneficial
2. somewhat beneficial
3. not beneficial [2]

The "2" indicates that vitamin C is thought to be somewhat beneficial.

4. a. Were you trained for an occupation that requires licensing? (For example, cosmetology, licensed practical nursing.)
   1. yes (*continue to question 4b*)
   2. no (*skip to question 5*)

   b. Did you take the appropriate examination for your specialization?
   1. yes (*continue to question 4c*)
   2. no (*skip to question 5*)

   c. Were you issued a license for your specialization?
   1. yes
   2. no (*skip to question 5*) ☐

Questions 5-7 are similar but they are not identical. Please be sure to answer all three questions.

5. Which of the following best describes your present situation?
   1. employed full-time (35 hours or more per week)
   2. unemployed, or employed part-time, but seeking full-time employment
   3. full-time student
   4. none of the above ☐

6. Which of the following best describes your present situation?
   1. employed full-time in my area of vocational specialization
   2. unemployed, or employed full-time or part-time, but seeking full-time employment in my area of vocational specialization
   3. full-time student
   4. none of the above ☐

7. Which of the following best describes your present situation?
   1. employed full-time in my *area* of vocational specialization
   2. employed full-time in an area *related* to my vocational specialization
   3. employed full-time in an area unrelated to my vocational specialization
   4. employed full-time or part-time, but seeking employment in my field of vocational specialization
   5. unemployed, but seeking employment in my field of vocational specialization
   6. full-time student
   7. none of the above ☐

DATA TABULATION

This section deals with the tabulation and presentation of the data obtained from Forms A and B. It follows the format of the forms item by item.

Form A

The data obtained from your students on Form A can be tabulated very easily.

Example: Assume a respondent group of 35, and refer to Table I for an example of how the raw data can be presented.

Table I
ABSOLUTE FREQUENCY COUNT

Value		Objective 1*	Objective 2†	Objective 3‡
1		9	9	13
2	*positive*	5	9	6
3		8	5	10
4	*neutral*	8	2	4
5		4	5	1
6	*negative*	1	0	1
7		0	5	0
		35	35	35

*Satisfaction with program.
†Selection of the program again.
‡Intention to enter occupation trained for.

Table I combines the data collected for each of the three items (objectives) listed as Objectives 1, 2 and 3. In other words, it presents the ways in which the 35 members of the respondent group reacted to each of the three items. The numbers in the three objective columns are absolute frequency counts of the score values in the value column.

The next step is to combine the data into smaller units. To simplify data treatment, responses with values of 1, 2 and 3 can be considered positive; 4, neutral; and 5, 6 and 7, negative. The data in Table I can now be combined and presented as shown in Table II.

Table II
COMBINED TOTALS

Rating	Objective 1	Objective 2	Objective 3
Positive	22	23	29
Neutral	8	2	4
Negative	5	10	2
	35	35	35

The number 22 listed under Objective 1 indicates that 22 of the students who responded considered their vocational education experience positive enough to place a 1, 2 or 3 in the box after Item 1 on Form A. Further examination reveals that 8 students rated their vocational education experience neutral by placing a 4 in the box, and 5 students felt their experience was negative enough to place a 5, 6 or 7 in the box. All that remains now is to change the data into percentages and report the information as shown in Table III.

Table III
PERCENTAGE OF RESPONSES BY OBJECTIVES

Rating	Objective 1	Objective 2	Objective 3
Positive	63%	66%	83%
Neutral	23%	6%	11%
Negative	14%	28%	6%
	100%	100%	100%

The data presented in Table III show that 63% of the students found their experiences in the vocational specialization to be satisfying, 23% were neutral, and 14% found the experience unsatisfactory. The data can also be presented as follows:

Objective	*Results*
1	63% of the students who completed the occupational education program rated the experience satisfying.
2	66% of the students who completed the occupational education program indicated that they would take the same program if they had to make the choice again.
3	83% of the students who completed the occupational program indicated that they planned either to enter their area of specialization or to go on to advanced training/education in that area.

The date of program completion, the name of the program specialization, and the name of the teacher (or teachers) involved in the program should be included with the data collected from Form A.

Form B

The first three items of Form B are identical to the three items of Form A. This repetition is necessary if the analysis and data are to be presented in the same format. Remember that Form B is mailed to former students six months or more *after* completion of or graduation from a program of vocational specialization.

Item 4. Item 4 of Form B deals only with occupations such as cosmetology or licensed practical nursing, where a license is essential for employment.

The data can be presented in one of two ways: (1) They can be presented as percentages based on the total number of graduating students in the class. For example, if 15 students from a class of 20 pass the cosmetology examination, the percentage of students who passed the exam would be 75%. (2) They can be presented as percentages based on the number of graduating students who actually take the exam. For example, if only 17 students from a class of 20 take the cosmetology examination, and 15 of the 17 pass the exam, 88.2% of the students who took the exam passed it. Since, in most cases, the school has little or no control over who will take the examination, the second alternative seems best—to report the results in terms of the number passing compared to the number taking the examination. To illustrate the difference, the data can be expressed in either of the following ways:

1. 75% of the graduates from the cosmetology program passed the license examination within six months after program completion.
2. 88.2% of the graduates from the cosmetology program who took the license examination passed it within six months after program completion.

Both reports are correct and reflect the data honestly.

For ease of usage Item 4 of Form B is divided into three parts. The procedure for use is as follows:

Step 1: Item 4a asks the graduates to state whether their area of specialization is one for which a license is needed. The teacher or person conducting the evaluation also would know the answer to this question. If licensing does not apply, simply skip Item 4 and move on to Item 5.

Step 2: Continue with Step 2 (Item 4b) only if you are going to report data in a licensed occupational area. Item 4b asks the graduate to indicate whether he/she did take the license examination in the area of specialization.

Suppose you are following up on a cosmetology class with 30 graduates, and you receive 25 responses. Of the 25, 20 students indicate that they did take the exam, and 5 indicate that they did not. You know that 25 out of 30 returned the form for a percentage of return of 83.3%. You also know that 20 out of the 25 took the examination, so you may correctly state the following: 80% (20 ÷ 25 = 80%) of those responding to the item indicated that they did take the examination. Five, or 20%, did not take the license examination.

Step 3: This step deals with Item 4c, which again should be answered only by those students who took the license examination. Using the same example as in Step 2, continue as follows:

Of the 20 students who did take the examination, 15 indicated that they passed the examination. Therefore you may state that 75% (15 out of 20) of the students who took the license examination in cosmetology passed it within six months after program completion.

Step 4: Report the data using the following format:

Occupation	*Students Passing License Examination* Number	Percentage
Cosmetology	15	75

Results: 75% of the students who took the appropriate license examination successfully passed it and held the license within six months after graduation. (A total of 20 students indicated that they had taken the exam and 15 of the 20 indicated that they passed it.)

Item 5. Item 5 on Form B relates to Objective 5, which deals with the percentage of graduates employed full-time. Remember that this item is concerned only with full-time employment in general. Employment need not be in the area of specialization trained for. To report the data for the same group of cosmetology graduates, of which 25 out of 30 students completed Form B, the procedure is as follows:

Step 1: Item 5 has four possible answer categories, which are indicated by the numbers 1, 2, 3 and 4. Begin by tabulating the number of responses from the group. In the case of the cosmetology students, 15 responded that they were employed full-time (1), 5 responded that they were employed part-time or unemployed (2), 3 responded that they were full-time students (3), and 2 responded that they were not available for full-time work (4).

Step 2: Objective 5 is concerned only with full-time employment or those available for full-time employment, categories 1 and 2. Those who responded with a 3 were full-time students and not interested in full-time employment. Those who responded with a 4 were not available for full-time employment. Your main concern is with category 1, "employed full-time (35 hours or more per week)" and category 2, "unemployed, or employed part-time, but seeking full-time employment."

Step 3: Adding the responses in categories 1 and 2, you have a total of 15 + 5, or 20. Since 15 out of the 20 students available for full-time employment were employed full-time, you may conclude that 75% of the students (15 out of 20) available for employment were employed full-time.

Step 4: Report the data using the following format:

Number in Group	Number Seeking Employment	Number Employed	Percentage Employed
30	20	15	75%

Results: 75% of the graduates who sought employment were employed full-time within six months after graduation.

Step 5: You may now report the following:

a. Fifteen graduates reported that they were employed in the area of specialization they trained for; employment. Three were full-time students and an additional 2 were not available for full-time employment. (Data based on 25 questionnaires returned out of 30 sent out.)
b. Fifteen out of 30 graduates (50%) of the cosmetology program were employed full-time. (Note: This figure is based on the total number of graduating students, and does not account for those who did not respond, or who reported that they were not available for full-time work.)
c. The most accurate conclusion is that 75% of the graduates who sought employment were employed full-time within six months after graduation.

Item 6. Item 6 on Form B relates to Objective 6, which deals with the percentage of graduates employed full-time in the specialization they trained for. Remember that this item is concerned only with employment in the field trained for. The graduate decides whether his/her employment is in the area of training. To report the data for the cosmetology graduates, the procedure is as follows:

Step 1: Item 6 has four possible answer categories, which are indicated by the numbers 1, 2, 3 and 4. Begin by tabulating the number of responses from the group. In this case 10 students responded that they were employed full-time in the area of specialization (1), 5 responded that they were unemployed or employed full-time or part-time while seeking employment in the area of specialization (2), 3 responded that they were full-time students (3) and 7 responded that none of the above answers applied to them.

Step 2: Since Objective 6 is concerned only with those graduates employed full-time in the area of specialization, or seeking such employment, only categories 1 and 2 are of concern.

Step 3: Adding the responses in categories 1 and 2 gives a total of 10 + 5 or 15. Since 10 out of 15 students were employed in the area of specialization trained for and 5 were seeking such employment, you may conclude that 66⅔% (10 out of 15) of the students were employed in the area of specialization they trained for.

Step 4: Report the data using the following format:

Number in Group	Number Seeking Employment	Number Employed	Percentage Employed
30	15	10	66⅔%

Results: 66⅔% of the graduates who sought employment were employed full-time in their area of vocational specialization within six months after graduation.

Step 5: You may now report the following:

a. Ten students reported that they were directly employed in the area of specialization they trained for, another 5 were seeking such employment. Three were full-time students, and 7 additional students were not available for employment. (Data based on 25 questionnaires returned out of 30 sent out.)
b. Ten out of 30 graduates of the cosmetology program were employed in the area they trained for (33⅓%). (Note: This figure is based on the total number of graduating students, and does not account for those who did not respond, or who reported that they were not available for full-time employment.)
c. The most accurate conclusion is that 66⅔% of the graduates who sought employment were employed full-time in their area of specialization within six months after graduation.

Item 7. Item 7 on Form B relates to Objective 7, which deals with full-time employment in a job related to the occupation the student trained for. Remember that this item is concerned only

with employment in a related occupation. The graduate decides whether his/her employment is related to the training received. Again using the example of the cosmetology graduates, the procedure is as follows:

Step 1: Item 7 has seven answer categories, which are indicated by the numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7. Once again, begin by tabulating the number of responses. In this case 10 students responded that they were employed full-time in their area of specialization (1); 3 responded that they were employed full-time in an area related to the area of specialization (2); 2 responded that they were employed full-time in an area unrelated to the area of specialization (3); 2 responded that they were employed full-time or part-time while seeking employment in the area of specialization (4); 5 responded that they were unemployed, but seeking employment in the area of specialization (5); 3 responded that they were full-time students (6) and no graduates replied that none of the above applied to them.

Step 2: Objective 7 deals with those employed in occupations that they consider related to the occupation trained for. In addition, those seeking employment in their area of specialization must be considered. Your concern is with category 2, "employed full-time in an area related to my vocational specialization," category 4, "employed full-time or part-time, but seeking employment in my field of vocational specialization" and category 5, "unemployed, but seeking employment in my field of vocational specialization."

Step 3: Adding the responses in categories 2, 4 and 5, you have a total of 3 + 5 + 2, or 10. Three out of the total of 10 were employed in occupations that they considered related to the area of their vocational training (2). Seven out of the 10 were seeking employment in the area of their specialization (4 and 5) and must be considered as having been available for work. You may therefore conclude that 30% (3 out of 10) of those who sought work were employed in an occupation related to their area of specialization.

Step 4: Report the data using the following format:

Number in Group	Number Seeking Employment	Number Employed	Percentage Employed
30	10	3	30%

Results: 30% of the graduates who sought employment were employed full-time in an area they considered related to their area of vocational specialization within six months after graduation.

Step 5: You may now report the following:

a. Three graduates reported that they were employed in an occupation related to their vocational training; another 7 reported that they were still seeking employment in their area of specialization. Those employed in related positions are in addition to those employed directly in the occupation trained for. (Data based on 25 questionnaires returned out of 30 sent out.)

b. Three out of the 30 graduates of the cosmetology program were employed in related occupations on a full-time bais (10%). (Note: This figure is based on the total number of graduating students, and does not account for those who did not respond, or who reported that they were not available for full-time employment.)

c. The most accurate conclusion is that 30% of the graduates who sought employment were employed a full-time basis (10%). (Note: This figure is based area of specialization within six months after graduation.

The data you have collected and tabulated for Objectives 4, 5, 6 and 7 may now be presented in the following manner:

Objective	*Results*
4	75% of the graduates who took the appropriate license examination successfully passed it and held the license within six months after graduation.
5	75% of the graduates who sought employment were employed full-time within six months after graduation.

6 66⅔% of the graduates who sought employment were employed full-time in their area of vocational specialization within six months after graduation.

7 30% of the graduates who sought employment were employed full-time in an area they considered related to their area of specialization within six months after graduation.

A tabular format can also be used to present the data:

OBJECTIVES VERSUS ACHIEVED PERFORMANCE

	Objective	Stated Level of Performance	Achieved Level of Performance
1	Satisfaction with program	65%	63%
2	Selection of program again	65%	66%
3	Intention to enter area of specialization	60%	83%
4	Licensing	75%	75%
5	Full-time employment	60%	75%
6	Employment in specialization	35%	66⅔%
7	Employment in related area	15%	30%

This presentation allows the user to compare the level of performance stated in the objective with the level of performance actually achieved.

SUMMARY

Evaluation Hints for Vocational Teachers has attempted to present, in a simple format, a system of evaluating vocational instruction that should be useful to vocational instructors at a variety of levels. With adequate planning and the establishment of measurable objectives of performance for vocational graduates, the system described can serve as a system of evaluation and accountability for districts, schools, programs and teachers interested in how their students rate the instruction received while in the program, and their success in the job market following program completion.

The user of this booklet will have to establish realistic levels of performance based on local and national labor markets so objectives may be added or deleted as needed to meet the educational needs of the local community. The percentages reflected in the examples used here were arrived at by teacher input and adopted by the author's local board of education.